

James Oglethorpe May 9 1745
(71)
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AN
AUTHENTICK ACCOUNT
OF THE
LATE ACTION

Between the A R M Y of the
HIGH ALLIES,

Commanded by His ROYAL HIGHNESS

WILLIAM Duke of Cumberland,

William Augustus Duke of Cumberland

AND THE

Veldt-Marshal K O N I G S E G G;

And that of *France*, commanded by the most Christian
KING in Person, and the Marshal Count *de Saxe*, in the
Neighbourhood of *TOURNAY*, on May 1, O. S. 1745.

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AUTHENTIC ACCOUNT

OF THE

BATTLE OF COTTON



AND THE

CONQUEST OF THE ROYAL HIGHNESS

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AND THE

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THE

LONDON

THE

[The end of the world]



AUTHENTICK ACCOUNT

Late ACTION near T O U R N A Y.

Aeth. May, 12. N. S. 1745.

THE Army of the Allies arriving at *Maubray* on the 9th, and having Intelligence that the Enemy had recalled the two great Corps of Horse and Foot, which were encamp'd at *Warneton* and *Pont D'Espieres*, and were in motion on all Sides of *Tournay*, a Council of War was held, to consider the Expediency of attacking the Enemy, who appear'd to be disposing themselves in a Line of Battle. That Council lasted till it was pretty far in the Night, and a Resolution was at last taken to march directly towards the *French* Army, which was executed accordingly. In the mean time the *French* Army was advancing on the left, though exposed to a prodigious fire from the line. The 10th, the Army arrived in two Columns at *Bruffoch*, the Right extending as far as the Village of *Bagny*, and taking up the Space of near two *French* Miles. There the Generals receiv'd Intelligence that the *French* had drawn off a great Part of their Artillery, and made other Dispositions which look'd at least as like raising the Siege, as preparing to give the Confederates Battle. They were likewise inform'd, that the Count *de Saxe* had caus'd five Bridges to be laid the Night before over the *Scheldt*, and had sent away all the heavy Baggage under an Escort of Horse and Dragoons. This too had a doubtful Appearance, but the *Veldt-Marshal* *Konigsegg* was clearly of Opinion, that the *French* meant to venture an Engagement, grounding his Sentiment chiefly on the Arrival of the King and Dauphin in their Camp two Days before. The Baggage of the Allies was therefore ordered to halt, and the Surgeons that had been sent for from *Brussels* on the 8th, had proper Directions given them. At Ten in the Evening, Orders

were

were sent to the respective General Officers, and the Army began to form between One and Two o'Clock.

At a quarter past Two, the Army began to march, the Infantry being drawn up in two Lines, the Right composed of the *English* Troops, the Left of the Forces of the States General, and the rest of the Forces of the Allies being in the Center. Between three and four o'Clock, the Forces that were to begin the Action, were compleatly formed before the Enemy's Line. The Marshal *Count de Saxe* had disposed his Troops so as to have the Village of *Antoin*, and the River *Scheld* on the Right, the little Village of *Notre Dame* in the Center, and a Wood beyond it on the Left. His Forces were without the Line, which was well furnished with Artillery, exclusive of two great Batteries, one beyond the Village of *Notre Dame*, concealed in part by a straggling Wood; the other behind part of the Village of *Antoin*, which seemed to lie in Ruins.

The Highland Regiment of Foot and some light armed Corps which formed the Forlorn of the Allied Army, began the Attack between six and seven with great Bravery, but were most of them cut off by the prodigious Fire of the Batteries, as well as by a very close and vigorous Fire from their small Arms. The English Guards who were on the Right, pressed on, notwithstanding the Fire from the Batteries, and that the Horse were not come up as was expected, upon which the French gave Ground and retired through the Wood that was behind them towards the *Scheld*, but being re-inforced by the Regiments of *Beauvois*, *Touraine*, *La Ferre*, & *Eu*, making in all seven Battalions, they recovered their Ground, from which they were driven a second Time with great Slaughter. In the mean Time the Dutch Infantry advanced on the Left, though exposed to a prodigious Fire from the Enemies Cannon, by which the Prince of *Waldeck* had his Horse killed under him, and was with great difficulty disengaged. On this Side, the French were covered by Lines, so that they suffered but very little by our Small Arms, and when the Cavalry came up, the French began to play from their Battery behind the Ruins, which consisted of twenty-four Pieces of heavy Cannon.

About Noon the *Gensd'armie* consisting of eight Squadrons, in which the *Dauphin* was said to be in Person, charged the *English* on the Right, and obliged them to quit the Ground they had gained, and to retire towards *Reson*. The Duke of *Cumberland* who was extremely exposed, and had (as is said) three Horses killed under him in the Action, did all that was possible to recover them, and actually rallied them twice; but the Battery from the Wood galled them so much, that notwithstanding the Cavalry



valry, which were then come up, engaged the *French* very gallantly, it was thought expedient to retire, it appearing plainly that from the Advantage the Enemy had of two Causeways in Front, their Entrenchments in the Rear, and their Redoubts with above sixty Pieces of Cannon, on their Flanks, and perpetual Reinforcements of fresh Troops, it was impossible to force them. About one of o'Clock, Orders were given to retreat, which the Men very unwillingly obeyed, notwithstanding the Foot had suffered extremely, and the best part of their Officers were either killed or wounded.

The Action continued for between six and seven Hours, with as great Warmth, as has been known at any Time within the Memory of the oldest Officers, and where the Forces of the Allies had any Opportunity of engaging fairly, the *French* were constantly broken and forc'd to give Ground, notwithstanding that their Officers, especially those of the *French* Guards did all that was possible to encourage them. The Marshal Count *Saxe* had disposed every Thing in such a Manner, as to make the most of the great Advantages he had, for wherever the Ground was level, he had run Lines, one behind another of different Heights, so that the Troops were excessively embarrassed in passing them, at the same Time that they were exposed to the Fire of a numerous and well served Artillery. There were but 17,000 Men left under the Command of the Duke de *Harcourt*, on the other Side the *Scheld*, and not above 5000 in the Lines of Circumvallation on this Side, so that there were at least 65,000 Men in the Action, and with such a Superiority, it is not at all wonderful that the *French* kept their Ground. Part of their Cavalry behaved very well, and Part very indifferently. Their Infantry made very good Fires before they were attack'd sword in Hand, but were every where broken when the *English* and *German* Foot fell in amongst them, and must have been entirely beaten, if not sustained by fresh Corps.

The Retreat was performed in great Order, and the Cavalry for the most part covered the Foot effectually. The *French* Horse pursued at first very eagerly, but being repulsed with some loss, they contented themselves with being Spectators of the Match of the Allies, more especially after they were out of the reach of the Artillery on the Line. It is believed that the *French* Infantry suffer'd extremely, especially on their Left, where several Officers of Distinction were seen to fall, and two or three were made Prisoners, but were afterwards left on account of their being so wounded, that it was impossible to have carried them off alive. The Army march'd in about four Hours and three Quarters to their next Camp, to which in the Night, many returned, that through

Faintness or Wounds had dropp'd in the March, and it does not appear that the *French* Horse advanced above two Miles from their own Camp.

It is believed that immediately after the Army of the Allies began to retire, the Enemy began to work on restoring their Batteries against the Place, which made a prodigious Fire during the whole Time of the Engagement, which the *French* were in no Condition to answer; but about Nine in the Evening, their Artillery and Mortars began to play with great Fury, and we learn from some Deserters, that they talk of attacking the covered Way the Day after To-morrow. It is said that M. *Saxe* has assured the King the Place may be taken in 15 Days, but it is believed he will find himself mistaken in his Conjecture, and that the Baron *de Dort* will be able to hold out to the Beginning of *June*, before which the Army of the Allies will be in a Condition to attack the *French* upon more equal Terms.

It is impossible to say any thing with Certainty as to the Loss on either Side, only it is reported that the *English* have lost one Lieutenant-General, one Major-General, nine Colonels, three Majors, 34 Captains, Brigadier *Salis*, and Colonel *Van Rassel*, are all the *Dutch* Officers of Distinction that are kill'd, but there are a great many wounded, and a few taken Prisoners. Such as hazard Computations, pretend that the *English* have lost 3500 Men, and the total of the Loss besides on the Part of the Allies, may be 4500, and this beyond Question, is rather above than below the Truth, because grounded on the Proportion between Officers and private Men, which very seldom holds, especially with any Degree of Exactness.

We do not conceive that any very important Consequences can follow from this Repulse, because the Confederates are at present so advantageously encamped, as to cover all the Country behind them. There are 8000 Men actually raising in these Provinces, for the Service of his *Britannick* Majesty, in order to compleat the Troops in *British* Pay to 40,000 Men, and we expect daily a Reinforcement of nine *Austrian* Battalions, besides the *Dutch* Troops that are known to be advancing to our Relief, and those that may be still drawn out of Garrison. Veldt-Marshal *Konigsberg* dispatch'd a Courier early this Morning to *Vienna*; the Duke and Prince *Waldeck* sent each of them a Courier to the *Hague* last Night. The Earl of *Dunmore*, an *English* General, is very soon expected from *Brussels*, and it is believed that we shall shortly hear of an Embarkation from *England*, at least so we are promised by such as have been hitherto always as good as their

It is impossible to find Words to express the Steadiness and Resolution shewn by the Troops of the Allies, notwithstanding this Disappointment; the Soldiers express the highest Regard for their Officers, and every Body seems to be satisfied, that the small Advantage the Enemy has gain'd, and that too at a very high Expence, was owing entirely to their Superiority in Numbers, and to the Warmth of their Artillery, rather than their Courage. They seem to desire nothing so much as a fresh Opportunity of displaying their Ardour and Love of their Country in another Engagement, for which there is no Doubt our Generals will prepare with all possible Expedition. A large and particular Relation of this Action is preparing, and the Circumstances that I send you are taken from those who are employed in that Affair. In the mean Time you may safely depend upon this as altogether as clear and as distinct as it is possible to collect any Thing in this Conjecture.



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